IN THE CLAIMS

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims:

1. (Currently Amended) A method of automatically determining a reading of a Japanese word; the method including:

receiving an input string of at least one character representing the Japanese word;

choosing for each character of the Japanese word a corresponding reading, by:

[[-]] for each character determining whether the character is a kanji, hiragana, or katakana character;

[[-]] for a hiragana or katakana character choosing the only one reading associated with the character; and

[[-]] for a kanji character determining whether or not the immediately preceding character and/or the immediately succeeding character is also a kanji character; ~~and~~ choosing for the kanji

character an on-reading associated with the kanji character if the immediately preceding character and/or the immediately succeeding character in the word is also a kanji character, performing a group on-reading for a group of a plurality of sequential kanji characters in the word including the kanji character being converted and choosing a most frequent group reading associated with the group, splitting up results of the group on-reading to obtain individual readings of each individual kanji character in the group; and choosing a kun-reading associated with the kanji character otherwise;

concatenating the corresponding readings of each character of the Japanese word; and

outputting the concatenated reading.

2. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein for a kanji character that in the word is not immediately preceded or succeeded by a kanji character, the method includes choosing a most frequent one of a plurality of kun-readings associated with the kanji character.

3. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein for a kanji character that in the word is immediately preceded or succeeded by at least one kanji character, the method includes choosing a most frequent one of a plurality of on-readings associated with the kanji character.

Claim 4 (Canceled)

5. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method as claimed in claim 1, wherein each hiragana character is associated with one reading; and the method includes for a hiragana character of the word choosing the associated reading.

6. (Currently Amended) ~~A~~ The method as claimed in claim 5, wherein each katakana character is associated with a corresponding hiragana character; and the method includes for a hiragana character of the word choosing the reading associated with the hiragana character corresponding to the katakana character.

7. (Currently Amended) A computer readable storage medium

comprising a program product operative to cause a processor to perform the method as claimed in claim 1.

8. (Currently Amended) A system for automatically determining a reading of a Japanese word includes:

an input for receiving an input string of at least one character representing the Japanese word;

a memory for storing:

for hiragana characters a respective associated reading;

for katakana characters a respective associated reading; and

for a kanji character a respective associated on-reading and a respective

associated kun-reading;

a processor for determining for each character of the Japanese word a

corresponding reading, by:

[[-]] for each character determining whether the character is a kanji, hiragana, or katakana character;

[[-]] for a hiragana or katakana character choosing the

stored reading associated with the character; and

[[-]] for a kanji character determining whether or not the immediately preceding character and/or the immediately succeeding character is also a kanji character; performing a group on-reading for a group of a plurality of sequential kanji characters in the word including the kanji character being converted and choosing a most frequent group reading associated with the group, splitting up results of the group on-reading to obtain individual readings of each individual kanji character in the group; and choosing for the kanji character the on-reading associated with the kanji character if the immediately preceding character and/or the immediately succeeding character in the word is also a kanji character, and choosing the kun-reading associated with the kanji character otherwise; and

for concatenating the corresponding readings of each character of the Japanese word; and

an output for outputting the concatenated reading.

9. (New) The method of claim 1, further comprising storing reading options with relative frequency of occurrences in a memory

for user selection of a desired reading.

10. (New) The method of claim 9, wherein the reading options are sorted by the relative frequency of occurrences.

11. (New) The system of claim 8, wherein reading options with relative frequency of occurrences are stored in the memory to enable a user to select a desired reading.

12. (New) The system of claim 11, wherein the reading options are sorted by the relative frequency of occurrences.